



BUILDING-STRUCTURE INVENTORY FORM

NYS OFFICE OF PARKS, RECREATION
& HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DIVISION FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
(518) 474-0479

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

UNIQUE SITE NO. _____
QUAD _____
SERIES _____
NEG. NO. _____

YOUR NAME: Cynthia Howk DATE: Dec., 1994
133 S. Fitzhugh St.
YOUR ADDRESS: Rochester, NY 14608 TELEPHONE: 546-7029
ORGANIZATION (if any): The Landmark Society of Western New York, Inc.

IDENTIFICATION

1. BUILDING NAME(S): Covinger - Kern House
2. COUNTY: Monroe TOWN/CITY: Greece VILLAGE: ---
3. STREET LOCATION: 2099 Ridge Road West (S.E. corner of Apollo Dr.)
4. OWNERSHIP: a. public ☐ b. private ☒
PRESENT OWNER: Dr. & Mrs. William Kern ADDRESS: (same) Rochester, NY 14626
6. USE: Original: residence/office Present: residence
7. ACCESSIBILITY TO PUBLIC: Exterior visible from public road: Yes ☒ No ☐
Interior accessible: Explain private residence

DESCRIPTION

8. BUILDING MATERIAL: a. clapboard ☐ b. stone ☐ c. brick ☐ d. board and batten ☐
e. cobblestone ☐ f. shingles ☐ g. stucco ☐ other: aluminum siding
Roof - asphalt shingles. Foundation - concrete block.
9. STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: a. wood frame with interlocking joints ☐
(if known) b. wood frame with light members ☒
c. masonry load bearing walls ☐
d. metal (explain) _____
e. other _____
10. CONDITION: a. excellent ☒ b. good ☐ c. fair ☐ d. deteriorated ☐
11. INTEGRITY: a. original site ☒ b. moved ☐ if so, when? _____
c. list major alterations and dates (if known): _____

(see continuation sheet)

12. PHOTO:

13. MAP:

"Here's an architect-designed house! Do we know who the architect is? Well, it's a good house, note the interesting entrance. I think that this is in the 'red minus' category; 'minus' for the siding. It goes with those 'Gold Coast' houses up on Edgemere Drive." P.Malo.

COLOR CODE

Red minus



14. THREATS TO BUILDING: a. none known ☐ b. zoning ☒ c. roads ☒
d. developers ☐ e. deterioration ☐
f. other: adjacent to principle commercial roadway in town.
15. RELATED OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:
a. barn ☐ b. carriage house ☐ c. garage ☒ - attached
d. privy ☐ e. shed ☐ f. greenhouse ☐
g. shop ☐ h. gardens ☐ rare
i. landscape features: deciduous & coniferous trees/shrubs (katsura
j. other: tree in front yard)
16. SURROUNDINGS OF THE BUILDING (check more than one if necessary):
a. open land ☐ b. woodland ☐
c. scattered buildings ☐
d. densely built-up ☒ e. commercial ☒
f. industrial ☐ g. residential ☒
h. other: _____
17. INTERRELATIONSHIP OF BUILDING AND SURROUNDINGS:
(Indicate if building or structure is in an historic district)

(see continuation sheet)

18. OTHER NOTABLE FEATURES OF BUILDING AND SITE (including interior features if known):

(see continuation sheet)

SIGNIFICANCE

19. DATE OF INITIAL CONSTRUCTION: 1939 (per owner) _____
ARCHITECT: Herbert Williamson (per owner's drawing) _____
BUILDER: Tosh Christ (per owner) _____

20. HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE:

(see continuation sheet)

21. SOURCES: (see continuation sheet)

22. THEM : residential

11c.

Contemporary aluminum siding has been installed on the exterior, c. 1970s-80s.

The kitchen was remodeled, the rear (south) patio/sun room was enclosed to become part of the new, expanded kitchen, and a new interior stairs to the cellar were constructed in 1962 (this kitchen remodeling was designed by Rochester contractor, Ben Weld).

The south elevation originally had a flat roof and a balcony, remodeled c. 1960s-70s.

Handicapped ramp added to north elevation (facade), c. 1980s-90s.

17. This 1939 Colonial Revival style house is located on a double lot on the southeast corner of Ridge Road West and Apollo Drive. It is situated in the southeast quadrant of the town. The house faces north onto Ridge Road, a busy, four-lane highway. The surrounding neighborhood along Ridge Road is mostly commercial; historic Falls Cemetery is a short distance to the east. To the south of the house is a mid-20th-century residential neighborhood.

18. This large, 2-1/2-story house has a rectangular plan with side-gabled roof and 1-1/2-story, flanking wings. Identical, corbelled brick chimneys are located on the gable peaks of the east and west elevations of the main section of the house. The house retains its original copper gutters.

The north and south elevations of the main, 2-1/2-story block and all of the elevations of the 1-1/2-story, east and west wings were originally clad with wood clapboard (intact under the contemporary aluminum siding). The east and west elevations of the main block are of brick veneer. The bricks are from St. Patrick's Cathedral, c. 1850s, originally located in the city on the northeast corner of N. Plymouth Ave. and Platt Street. Due to the expansion of Kodak Office Building, the cathedral was demolished in the late 1930s. These bricks were salvaged from the demolition and reused in the construction of this house.

The symmetrical facade features regular fenestration of 8/8, double-hung windows flanked by louvered wood shutters. The

18. continued

northwest and northeast corners have two-story, wood pilasters. The center entrance features brick steps and an eight-panel door flanked by paneled reveals and pilasters. Above the door is an elliptical, wood panel with fan-carved wood inset, arched molding, and keystone. The center entrance surround features Doric columns topped with a decorative entablature and an arched pediment.

The east, west, and south elevations of the main block have similar 8/8, double hung windows. The east and west elevations also have a pair of half-fan windows in the gables. The south elevation of the main block includes a contemporary picture window and casement window, apparently added during the 1962 kitchen expansion.

The 1-1/2-story east wing contains the attached garage with storage space above. Its fenestration matches the 8/8, double-hung windows of the main block. A square cupola with arched, louvered openings tops the ridgeline of the wing and a fan-shaped window is located in the east gable.

The 1-1/2-story west wing contains doctor's offices on the first story and former maid's quarters above. Its ell plan includes a gabled roof, 8/8 double-hung windows and three frieze windows with metal grilles on the facade. The original architect's drawing for this wing shows two gabled dormers on the north (facade) elevation. Instead, the frieze windows were built here. The north and west elevations entrances feature paneled doors with decorative hood molding above. The exterior wrought-iron-and-glass lighting fixtures above these entrances appear to be original.

The spacious interior of the house is little changed from its 1939 construction. The center entrance opens into a small vestibule and hallway, with closet and powder room. Floors are narrow, oak boards and there are three wood-burning fireplaces. The dining room is to the left (east) and the living room to the right (west). The living room and dining room have identical Colonial Revival style mantels: white-painted wood with entablature woodwork, dentil trim below, and black slate surround and hearth. The plaster walls of the living room and dining room are divided into panels by wood trim. Also in the living room and dining room are the original mirrored switchplates. In the dining room, the original maid's bell remains intact under the carpeting in the center of the room. The library features original pine

18. continued

paneling with vertical fluting. The west wing, always used for doctor's office, has painted pine paneling on the first floor walls. The kitchen originally had stainless steel appliances (i.e. dishwasher) that were removed during the 1962 remodeling/expansion.

Opposite the front entrance is the open staircase that leads to the second floor. The staircase includes two landings and a large, open central hallway above. The Colonial Revival newel post, railing, and 75 turned balusters remain intact. Upstairs, there are five bedrooms: three in the main block and two in the west wing. The master bedroom includes an adjacent dressing room (with sink, toilet and built-in drawers under the eaves), as well as a wood-and-slate Colonial Revival mantel/fireplace identical to the mantels on the first floor. The west wing includes the former maid's quarters (two bedrooms) and a rear staircase.

The property is landscaped with mature deciduous and coniferous trees and shrubs, as well as two brick sidewalks. Of particular note is the rare Katsura tree, on the front lawn near the northeast corner of the house (another local example of this species is at Highland Park). Originally, the front yard had additional land, but expansion of Ridge Road in recent years has reduced the width of the lawn by 15 feet.

20. This 1939 house is architecturally significant as an outstanding example of early-20th-century Colonial Revival architecture in the town. The house retains a high degree of design, materials, and craftsmanship. The house is historically significant for its association with the early 20th-century residential/suburban development of Ridge Road West, which was mostly farmsteads into the early 1900s. It is also historically significant for its continued use as a doctor's residence-and-office since its construction in 1939.

The symmetrical, gabled roof plan with center entrance porch and Doric columns is a typical plan for early-20th-century Colonial Revival architecture. About 25% of Colonial Revival houses use this side-gable plan. The details on this style of house tended to be exaggerated prior to 1910 and more "correct" afterward. The side-gable plan was built throughout the Colonial Revival era, but predominates after

20. continued

about 1910.

First "rediscovered" in the late 1870s, the Colonial Revival style gained its greatest popularity in the early 1900s. It reflects the entire rebirth of interest in the early English and Dutch houses of the Atlantic seaboard. The style was widely popularized through magazines and architectural publications, such as the "White Pine Series." Colonial Revival houses built in the years between 1915 and 1935 reflect these influences by more closely resembling their 18th century prototypes. The economic depression of the 1930s, World War II, and changing postwar fashions led to a simplification of the style in the 1940s and '50s.

The details characteristic of the Colonial Revival style that are seen in this house are: symmetrical design, center entrance with decorative detailing/entrance hood, multi-pane double-hung windows, corbelled, brick, gable-end chimneys, decorative cupola, pilasters, interior staircase (railing, balusters, newel post) and wood mantels with dentil details. A distinctive and noteworthy feature in this house is the use of brick and wood clapboard for the exterior walls. It is not common to find two principal walls of wood construction and the two other walls with brick veneer. The use of 19th-century brick from St. Patrick's Cathedral (demolished in late 1930s) for the east and west elevations is a distinctive example of recycling. With its handsome detailing and proportions, the front entrance is one of the most beautifully designed, early-20th-century, Colonial Revival entrances in the town.

The architectural significance of the house would be enhanced if the aluminum siding was removed and the original wood siding was repaired/re-painted.

The 1902 county map shows this area as undeveloped, open land marked "Clark Subdivision." One street is shown, but there are no buildings on the site. The 1924 county map shows this as the "M.F. Clark Farm Subdivision 57-18." The early "suburbanization" of formerly rural Ridge Road is seen with the sixteen small building lots laid out along the south side of Ridge Road from the Monroe Cemetery (now Falls Cemetery) to just beyond this property. Two large, frame barns from the Clark farm are shown just to the south of these building lots. Apollo Drive has not yet been laid out. However, there are eight new streets (Newton Rd. west to Alden Rd.)

20. continued

with building lots (no houses yet) to the north of Ridge Road. It is interesting to note the use of several "New England" names for these streets: Newton, Cabot, Nantucket, Standish, Alcott, Alden - yet another reflection of the interest in Colonial history (and Colonial Revival design) in the early 20th century.

The 1930 suburban directory does not list #2099 Ridge Road West. However, the Clark family cited on the 1902 and 1924 maps is included in the listings. There is a house at #2069 with Mrs. Adele Clark and a house at #2081 with Louis M. Clark and Kenneth Hutchinson in two units.

The house at #2099 Ridge Road West was built in 1939 by Dr. Herbert and Marie Covinger. He was a general practitioner. They previously built the house at #2047-2053 Ridge Road West, which they owned and resided in prior to the construction of #2099. Dr. Covinger built this house as a combination private residence and attached office for his medical practice. During World War II, Dr. Covinger was exempted from military service due to his medical practice.

The house was designed by architect, Herbert Williamson. The present owners of the house have a blue-line architectural rendering with a view of the exterior from the northwest. This rendering shows the north (facade) and west elevations and the west wing (see attachments for a copy of this rendering). Williamson is listed in Carl Schmidt's 1959 Schmidt directory of Rochester architects: "Herbert C. Williamson was born in Rochester N.Y., July 3, 1907. He was educated at the University of Rochester and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He opened his office in the 1920s."

The rendering was drawn by "Kenwyn F. Phillips (1936)" and has the name: "Herbert Williamson Reg. Architect Rochester N.Y." in the lower right corner. It appears that the design for this house was initiated several years before its 1939 construction. The drawing shows the house and is particularly interesting for the view of the main block and the west wing - and the changes made between the proposed design and actual construction. The main, 2-1/2-story block appears in the rendering to be constructed entirely with brick veneer walls (not wood clapboard). It is possible that they did not have enough salvaged brick, and decided to build only the east and west elevations with a brick veneer. Also in the rendering, the west wing is shown with two, small,

20. continued

gabled dormers on the facade (north elevation). When the house was constructed, however, the dormers were not built. Instead, three frieze windows with decorative grilles were constructed on the facade, under the eaves.

This rendering came into the possession of the present owners fairly recently. It was brought to the Kerns about five years ago by Greece resident, Bernard Johnson. Johnson was married to one of Dr. Covinger's daughters (original owners/occupants of the house). This drawing was found in Dr. Covinger's papers when he died.

Dr. and Mrs. Covinger sold the property to Dr. Carl and Marie DeSando; Dr. DeSando was also a general practitioner who maintained his medical office here. They resided here in the 1950s. The 1959 county map shows this property as Lots 10 and 11 in the "Mrs. M.F. Clark 2nd Amend. 83-27" subdivision. Apollo Drive is laid out and houses are shown there. One block to the west of Apollo Drive is a large parcel of land marked, "PROPOSED SIBLEY PLAZA" - the eventual location of Greece Towne Mall.

Dr. William and Dr. Kathryn Kern purchased this property in 1961 from the DeSandos. At the time, however, they did not know of the plan to construct a large shopping plaza (as marked on the 1959 map) to the west of them. Dr. William Kern established his medical office in the west wing, where it continued until his recent retirement. It is here that the Kerns raised their family. The Kerns selected this Greece location because of its design and setting, as well as the pleasant community atmosphere they found in the town.

21. See final report for bibliography; site visit and interview with Dr. Kathryn Kern, 1/1995.



KENWYN PHILLIPS
36

2099 W. RIDGE ROAD



HERBERT WILLIAMSON
REG. ARCHITECT
ROCHESTER, N.Y.



